

Dear Senator,

I am writing to share with you my deepest concerns with Michigan's current Sex Offender Registry laws and the upcoming legislation to comply with the Adam Walsh Act. As the significant other of a registrant for the past nine years, I would specifically like to address the part of the law that could remove those who were adjudicated before the age of 14.

Convicted at age 11, my high school sweetheart, now 24 years old, struggles every day dealing with the severe anxiety that is caused solely by being on the Sex Offender Registry. Living a normal life is not a possibility for him, due to a childhood incident that happened long ago. As he tries to be a productive young adult, 13 years later, he faces the constant punishment and humiliation of being seen as a dangerous sex offender, a threat, a predator, and a child molester in the public eye. I think to myself, if they only knew he was 11 years old at the time.

He lives in a constant state of fear. He fears losing his job, his home, being publicly humiliated, and harassed. His family, my family, and myself fear that he will attempt suicide a 2nd time, as he did 3 years ago, due to being publicly humiliated by the registry. The roller coaster ride of emotions that we face every day is simply unbearable. We see the most considerate, harmless, loving young man living in a complete nightmare.

As I remain a registrant's significant other, the next steps in our life include marriage and starting a family; however, we cannot begin this part of our lives for fear of the affect that he, as a registrant, will have on our children and us. I fear that we will never be accepted into a neighborhood, community, and school as a family. Will he ever be able to attend his future children's school events?

When you're a child you dream of becoming whatever and whoever you want to be. For my boyfriend, those dreams were crushed before he even reached his middle school years due to these laws. I firmly believe that mistakes made by children should not be punishable to the extent of being listed on a public registry. I ask you to strongly consider giving people who made childhood mistakes a second chance by retroactively removing all those adjudicated before the age of 14 from the registry.

Sincerely,

Michelle K.